



UAE MARS 2117 PROJECT: TOWARDS THE FIRST HUMAN SETTLEMENT ON MARS

Move over Hollywood, the UAE's Mars 2117 project is bringing to life a real-life space odyssey that is set to rival even the most epic sci-fi blockbusters. The Mars 2117 Project is a UAE initiative with the goal of establishing the first habitable human settlement on Mars by 2117. To this end, the project aims to develop technologies and solutions for travel to Mars, explore the sustainability of human presence on Mars, and explore the scientific, economic, and social potential of future Mars settlement.

Currently, the project is in a preparatory phase with the goal of developing the scientific and innovative technical capabilities necessary to achieve sustainable settlement on Mars.

In July 2020, the UAE's first interplanetary mission was launched as part of the so-called "Hope" mission. The "Hope" probe, also known as the "Al-Amal" probe, has been orbiting Mars in a highly elliptical orbit since February 2021, collecting real-time data on the Martian atmosphere, in particular information on cloud formation, dust storms and the water cycle on Mars. Based on the probe's images, for example, a high-resolution map of Mars has already been created, showing geological features such as polar ice caps, mountains, extinct volcanoes and remnants of ancient rivers, lakes and valleys that were once flooded by liquid water approximately 3.5 billion years ago. Today, April 25, 2023, the Hope Probe has captured the clearest-ever image of Mars' moon Deimos and provided evidence that it was once a part of Mars and separated from it millions of years ago, challenging existing theories about its origin.

The Rashid Rover, the world's most compact rover, is expected to land on the Moon on April 25, 2023. The Rashid Rover will collect information and data about the "Mare Frigoris" and explore the "Atles" crater. Based on the data, it will evaluate how to build a human settlement, provide the scientific community with about 10 gigabytes of data on, for example, lunar plasma, lunar dust and the lunar surface, and based on this data further prepare for the exploration of Mars. In addition, the UAE is supporting international plans for a manned lunar landing (Artemis III) and the construction of a lunar space station.

Preparations for the colonization of Mars are also underway both on and over the Earth. By the end of 2024, the world's largest Mars simulation city, the "Mars Science City," with a budget of AED 500 million (about \$136.1 million), should be ready for operation. The main goal of Mars Science City is to simulate the Martian environment as realistically as possible. The city will consist of pressurized biodomes that will allow plant cultivation and agricultural activities in Mars-like conditions. There will also be robotics labs where technologies for Mars exploration and colonization can be developed and tested, and humans can prepare for their future space exploration missions. Furthermore, the first spacewalk by an astronaut from the United Arab Emirates is scheduled for April 28, 2023.



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The Emirates Space Law, Law No. 1 of 2014 followed by Federal Law No. 12 of 2019, was established by the UAE - specifically to regulate the Mars 2117 project. It provides the basis for regulating space activities in the UAE and establishes the responsibility of agencies and organizations, such as the Mohammed bin Rashid Space Centre (MBRSC) and the United Arab Emirates Space Agency (UAESA), to enforce laws and regulations related to spaceflight. It included clear provisions on licensing, liability and insurance of space activities to enable the implementation of the project and protect the interests of the companies and organizations involved. The UAE is committed not only to meeting international obligations, but also to the sustainable and responsible use of space.

From an international perspective, as a signatory to the Outer Space Treaty of 1967 and other international agreements, the UAE is committed to carrying out the use and exploration of outer space in accordance with the principles of international law and space law, including in particular peaceful use, freedom of scientific research, and the responsibility of states for their space activities. In addition, the UAE has signed several bilateral and multilateral agreements to cooperate with other countries in areas such as space exploration, technology development, and space travel.

The UAE Mars 2117 Project is an example of the UAE's commitment to space exploration and utilization, highlighting the importance of a clear legal framework for such ambitious space endeavors. Through clear and binding national laws and international obligations, the UAE can ensure that the project is conducted responsibly and aligns with the UAE's long-term space goals, advancing humanity like never before - to Mars. The project is a bold statement of the UAE's commitment to innovation and progress, and it will undoubtedly inspire future generations to reach for the stars.

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